



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

BARDIC PORTRAITS.



LLYWARCH HEN.

THE fifth and sixth centuries, it has before been intimated in the progress of this work, were remarkably signalized by the long and arduous struggle, which our ancestors maintained in the defence of their liberties. The hostility of the Saxons, originating in treachery, and continued in violence, was peculiarly qualified to call into action those powerful energies of the mind, which were displayed during the period under consideration, and which communicated their influence as well to the strains of the poet as to the sword of the warrior. Even the names, that have descended to our times, bear ample testimony to this fact. But the remoteness of the age, and the desolating events, that must since have occurred, fully justify the conclusion, that the chieftains and bards of that æra, of whom we now retain any record, must have borne but a small proportion to those whose history is entirely lost to us.

In no part of this island were the conflicts, consequent on the incursion of the Saxons, more frequent or more severe than in that portion of North Britain, which was anciently called *Cumbria* *. And it has been observed on former occasions, that the natives of this district shared a community of language, as well as of descent, with the inhabitants of Wales †. They were alike *Cymry*, and preserved in the name of their country the evidence of this identity. Exposed to the Saxons on one side, and to the Picts on the other, the *Cumbrians* supported a long and unequal

“ With eighteen virtuous excellencies was *Gwgawn* ab *Rhys* endowed; and there was one bad quality in *Gwgawn* disgracing the eighteen gifts.

This *Gwgawn*, there is reason to suppose, was the son of a Captain *Rhys* *Gwgawn*, who fought in the battle of *Cressy*, whom *Dafydd* ab *Gwilym* consigns to death there, for having married *Morvudd*, who was to the bard what *Laura* was to *Petrarch*, being the subject of 147 of his poems.

* The district, called *Cumbria*, embraced a larger extent of territory than the modern *Cumberland*: it comprised all the northern country anciently occupied by the *Cymry*, reaching perhaps to the borders of *Scotland*. The *Cymry*, upon the arrival of the Saxons, settled here, in *Cornwall*, and in *Wales*, in which latter place alone their descendants are now to be found.

† What is stated in the preceding note would sufficiently justify our appropriation of *Aneurin*, *Llywarch*, and others of their countrymen, even if it were not true, that the asylum, they found in *Wales*, proved at once the nurse of their genius and the guardian of their fame.

struggle with varying success, before they were compelled to give way to the united and overwhelming force of their enemies. It was the close of these eventful times, that produced those celebrated characters, which still give a lustre to the literary remains of Wales. Nor must it be forgotten, that we are indebted to these sources alone for having preserved any authentic memorials of an age so remote and so interesting. Without them we might never have known, that Arthur fought, or that Aneurin sang.

Among the Cumbrians of distinction, whether as warriors or poets, who lived during this period, Llywarch Hen, or Llywarch the Aged, fills an eminent place: eminent for his rank and genius, and still more eminent for his years and his misfortunes. He was the son of Elidyr Lydanwyn, a prince of the Northern Britons, who was fourth in descent from Coel, according to the British Chronicle, the 75th King of Britain. His mother was Gwawr, daughter of Brychan, an Irish chieftain, who settled afterwards in South Wales*. The paternal dominion of Llywarch was called Argoed, which has been reasonably conjectured to be a part of the present Cumberland, bordering on the great forest of Celyddon or Caledonia†: and that he exercised a sovereign power over this territory appears from the Triads, in which he is denominated one of the "three disinterested princes of Britain." From the same authority we learn, that Llywarch spent a part of his early life with Arthur, at that time raised by a general vote to the sovereignty of the States of Britain. In these ancient records he is distinguished as one of the "three intelligent bards," one of the "three counselling knights," and one of the "three free and discontented guests" of the court of Arthur. In addition to this, it appears from one of Llywarch's poems, entitled, *An Elegy on Geraint ab Erbin*, that he fought with Arthur in one of his battles‡; and, as this

* For an account of Brychan, see No. 5, p. 170.

† This is the opinion of Mr. Owen Pughe in his "*Heroic Elegies and other Poems of Llywarch Hen*," a book, to which the writer of this memoir is greatly indebted. And the bard himself, in his *Elegy on Old Age*, seems to allude to his patrimonial territory, when he says, "the men of Argoed have ever supported me." The Rev. Walter Davies, however, in a "*Statistical Account of Llanymynech*," published in the *Cambrian Register*, (vol. i. p. 276.) expresses an opinion, that the Argoed, here mentioned, is situate near Overton, in Flintshire. The name is not uncommon in Wales, and signifies a place "above a wood."

‡ This battle, Llywarch tells us, was fought at Llongborth, a sea-port

poem contains an eulogium of Arthur's prowess, it has been presumed, that it was written during his residence with that chieftain. And the bard farther informs us in his Ode to *Maenwyn*, that his youth was spent in warlike pursuits, for which he must have found abundant opportunity, whether with Arthur or in his native country. The passage, last alluded to, is in English as follows.

Maenwyn, whilst I was fresh in youth,
In the pursuit of savage slaughter,
I performed the part of a man, though yet a boy *.

How long *Llywarch* continued at the Court of Arthur it cannot be possible to determine; but, since he is recorded as one of its "three discontented guests," it may be inferred, that his stay there was of no great duration. Probably the troubles of his own country summoned him early away to join the ranks of her defenders. For in his Elegy on *Urien Reged*, a Cumbrian Prince, he expressly alludes to his connection with that chieftain, whom he calls his cousin, his lord, and his protector. Upon the death of *Urien*, who became the victim of assassination †, the defence of his dominions against the growing power of the Saxons devolved on his sons. *Llywarch* with his numerous issue united their force on this occasion; but, after having witnessed the loss of his patrimony and the fall of most of his sons in the unequal contest, he was compelled, like the father of *Aneurin*, to fly from his country with those that survived. And a kindred fate induced him also to seek an asylum in Wales, where he found one with

in the west of England. The name implies a "haven of ships;" and Mr. Pughe supposes it to mean Portsmouth. In the twelve battles of Arthur, enumerated by Nennius, there is no such place mentioned, unless *Caer Llion*, which implies literally a Fortress on the Floods, may be thought to have an identity of signification with *Llongborth*: and commentators are not agreed as to the situation of *Caer Llion*.—*Geraint*, who was slain in this combat, was a chieftain of *Dyvnaint*, now Devonshire; he is celebrated in the Triads as a great naval commander.

* "*Maenwyn*, tra vum i evras,
O ddylin dywal galanas;
Gwnawn weithred gwr cyd byddwn gwas."

CANU MAENWYN.

† The perpetrator of this bloody deed was *Llovan*; and *Llywarch* alludes to it in his Elegy on *Urien* in the following passage:—

There is a commotion throughout the country
In search of *Llovan* with the destroying hand.

And this is confirmed by the Triads, in which *Llovan* is styled one of the "three detested assassins" of Britain.

Cynddylan, at that time Prince of a part of Powys. To this he alludes in his Elegy on the Death of that chieftain in a passage, of which the following is a translation.

Cynddylan, the purple of Powys was thine ;
The life of my lord was a refuge to strangers :
O son of Cyndrwyn, for thee is my meaning *.

And it appears from the following lines, with which the same poem commences, that Cynddylan resided at that time at Pengwern, or Shrewsbury, the ancient seat of the Princes of Powys before the inroad of the Saxons had driven them to Mathraval.

Stand forth, ye virgins, and behold the habitation of Cynddylan,
The Palace of Pengwern, is it not in flames ? †

When Llywarch was received by Cynddylan, he found him and his brother Elvan engaged in a severe contest with a people, whom, in his Elegy last quoted, he calls Loegrians ‡. The exile chief immediately took an active part with his protector in this quarrel : and the battles, which ensued, proved fatal to the rest of his sons, whose death Llywarch laments, with parental fondness, in his Elegy on his Old Age. And we find from his Poem on Cynddylan, that the issue of this war proved not less disastrous to that Prince and his brother, whose fate the bard deploras in the following lines amongst many others.

The hall of Cynddylan is silent to-night,
After having lost its lord :—
Great God of Mercy, what shall I do ?
The hall of Cynddylan, how gloomy seems its roof !
Since the Loegrians have destroyed
Cynddylan and Elvan of Powys §.

* “ Cynddylan, Pywys borfor wych yt,
Cell esbyb bywyd ior:
Cenau Cyndrwyn cwynitor.”

MARWNAD CYNDDYLAN AB CYNDRWYN.

† “ Sevwch allan vorwynion, a syllwch werydre Gynddylan ;
Llys Pengwern neud tandde ?” Id.

‡ For an account of the first settlement of the Lloegrwys or Loegrians in this country, see Triads vii. and ix. translated in the 2d Number. Originally the name was confined in its application ; but it afterwards became general in reference to such of the inhabitants of Britain, as were not Cymry, and in which sense it appears to be here used by Llywarch.

§ “ Ystavell Cynddylan ys araf heno,
Gwedy colli ei hynav——
Y mawr drugarawg Duw, pa wna !
Ystavell Cynddylan, ys tywyll ei nen,
Gwedy diva o Loegrwys,
Cyuddylan, ac Elvan Pywys.”

Id.

It may farther be collected from this Poem, that Cynddylan was buried at Bassa, probably the place now called Basschurch near Oswestry. The following is the passage, which justifies this conclusion.

The churches of Bassa are near to-night
To the heir of Cyndrwyn;
The grave-house of fair Cynddylan*.

No clue is left us, whereby we can ascertain with precision the abode of Llywarch after the death of his friend and protector. But it appears probable, from some passages in his poems, that his latter years, which formed a period of unmixed affliction, were spent in Powys. One of his poems is addressed to the Cuckoo of the Vale of Cuawg; and, as strong allusions are made in it to his distress, it is likely, that it was written during the latter period of his life, when, therefore, he may have resided in this vale, which has been conjectured to be in Montgomeryshire †. And from his Elegy on his Old Age it may be inferred, that he afterwards lived at Llanvor in the county of Merioneth. But, wherever the evening of his days was consumed, it is certain, that it was pregnant with sorrows, which he has bewailed in the most affecting strains in his Elegy last mentioned, written after his connection with Cynddylan had terminated, as is evident from the following passage, and which also bears testimony to the infirmity, under which he then laboured.

Before I went on crutches I was bold,
I was admitted into the Congress-House
Of Powys, the Paradise of the Cymry ‡.

According to this poem, he farther appears to have been borne down at once by the accumulated infirmities of age, sickness, and grief; while the recollection of his ruined prosperity, his blighted happiness, his ungrateful friends, and, above all, the agonizing

* “ Eglwysau Bassa ynt wng heno
I etivedd Cyndrwyn:
Mablan Cynddylan wyn,”

MARWNAD CYNDDYLAN.

† The Vale of Cuawg is so called, most probably, from a river of that name: and what strengthens the conjecture is, that Llywarch in the same poem mentions *Aber Cuawg*, the Mouth or Confluence of the Cuawg, which may have been the very spot, where he resided. There is still a place near Machynlleth, in Montgomeryshire, called *Dol Glog*. May not this have taken its name from a river or brook in that neighbourhood?

‡ “ Cyn bum cain vaglawg, bum hy,
A'm cynnwysid yn nghyvyrdy
Pywys, paradwys Cymry.”

CANU I'W HENAINT A'I VRIBION.

remembrance of all his sons fallen a prey to the fury of battle seem to have completed a picture of misery almost without a parallel. And it may be collected from the poem, which contains this record of his complicated calamities, that the number of his sons was four and twenty, and that they were all chieftains.

Four-and-twenty sons I have had
Wearing the golden chain, leaders of armies*.

Of these the greatest number fell, as already noticed, in the defence of their native land under Urien Reged and his sons; but Llywarch enumerates four, who were buried in North Wales, and who, consequently, must have found their fate in the wars of Cynddylan†.

Of Llywarch himself it is related, that he ended his days at Llanvor near Bala; and the name of *Pabell Llywarch Hen*, or the Cot of Old Llywarch, given to a retired spot, in this parish, seems to confirm the tradition. And at the close of his *Elegy on his Old Age* the bard himself appears to allude, as before observed, to his residence at this place, where he must, in all probability, have lingered out a wretched existence. Dr. Davies affirms, that in his time an inscription was visible in the parish church of Llanvor on a wall, under which Llywarch was presumed to be buried; but all traces of this have long disappeared. The bard is supposed to have died about the middle of the seventh century, and, according to tradition, at the patriarchal age of one hundred and fifty years, after having long outlived his children, his friends, and his prosperity.

* "Pedwar meib ar ugaint a'm bu,
Eurdorchawg, tywysawg llu."

CANU I'W HENAINT.

The privilege of wearing the golden *torch* or *torques*, here alluded to, proves, that the sons of Llywarch must have been distinguished by their rank or their valour. The old bards make frequent allusion to this custom, which was, no doubt, very ancient. Aneurin, in particular, describes in his *Gododin* the march of three hundred and sixty-three warriors, thus decorated, to the battle of Catteraeth: and we learn from Dio. Cassius, that such an ornament was worn by Boadicea four centuries earlier. Nor was the practice confined to the ancient inhabitants of this country: Propertius tells us, that Britomartus, a chieftain of the Gauls, was thus distinguished. The custom was also common to other nations: and we find from the Prophet Daniel (Ch. v. ver. 7 and 29), that a chain of gold was in his time a mark of high rank in Babylon. It is likewise alluded to in the *Song of Solomon* (Ch. i. v. 10), though apparently not as a martial distinction. One of these ancient *insignia* was found in 1692 at Harlech, in Merionethshire, and two others have been discovered of late years, one at Dolau Cothi, in Carmarthenshire, and the other near Caerwys, in the county of Flint.

† These were Gwell, Sawyl, Llavyr and Llyngedwy, whose graves, the poet tells us, were at Rhiw Velen, Llangollen, Llorien and Ammarch.

A few observations may now be necessary on the poems, still extant, that are ascribed to this ancient chieftain. The number of these, as they are preserved in the *Archaiology*, is twelve, of which five bear the name of *Elegies*. Of the remaining seven, two are lyrical, and the other five form the vehicles of proverbial lore, to which *Llywarch* seems to have been particularly attached. It is true, that some of these ancient remains have been denied to be genuine; but, as the same characteristics pervade all, a degree of internal evidence is thus produced in their favour, which must make it extremely difficult, when the genuineness of any is admitted, to prove the reverse of the position with respect to the rest*. And that some are undoubtedly genuine appears from the bard having introduced into them his own name and the circumstances of his life, as well as from other concurrent testimony, which can not reasonably be disputed. It is not too great an assumption then to set down all the poems, now preserved under the name of *Llywarch*, as his, distinguished, as they all are, by the same traits of simplicity, pathos, and sententious wisdom. Another feature, likewise common to all, is the metre, in which they are written. This is the *Triban Milwr* or Warrior's Triplet, the most ancient perhaps of all the Welsh metres: and its artless character must be sufficiently obvious from the few examples already quoted †.

Besides the characteristics, thus assigned to the poems of *Llywarch*, they may be farther described as being historical and moral, and therefore abounding in valuable information with respect to the age, in which they were written. Some of the historical notices have already been cited, and it may be sufficient to observe generally here, that many of them are confirmed by the *Triads* and other ancient memorials. The moral poems are remarkable for the sound and elegant axioms, which they convey, though delivered in a form extremely inartificial, yet quite characteristic of those early times. The following lines, selected from different poems, afford examples of these proverbial triplets.

* Among those, who have somewhat rashly declared their scepticism on this occasion, is Mr. Turner in his very able "Vindication of the Genuineness of the Ancient British Poems;" a work, which confers on a stranger the honour of being the most successful advocate, that has yet appeared, of our national poetry.

† It is not improbable, that the lines, which *Cæsar* mentions to have been committed to memory by the *Awenyddion*, were written in this ancient metre, which, being in the nature of a Triad, seems particularly well adapted to that purpose.

On All Saint's Eve, a season of pleasant gossiping,
 The gale and the storm go together;
 It is the work of falsehood to keep a secret *.
 Wealth will not be bestowed on the mischievous,
 But sorrow and anxious care :
 What God hath done he will not undo †.
 The leaf, that is scattered by the wind,
 Alas, how perishable is it !
 Already it is old,—this year it was born ‡.

Among the most interesting portions of Llywarch's productions are his complaint of the miseries of his lot in his *Elegy* on his Old Age §, his lamentation of the fate of his sons in the same poem, and his pathetic description of the desolation, that reigned in the mansions of Urien and Cynddylan, upon their death, in the respective *Elegies* on those chieftains. The *Elegy* on Geraint contains too some fine and animated passages descriptive of the horrors of a battle : and the stanza or triplet, with which the poem commences, deserves to be quoted.

When Geraint was born, the portals of Heaven were open,
 Christ then vouchsafed what was supplicated,
 A countenance beaming with beauty, the glory of Britain ||.

Although Llywarch is here styled a bard, the word must not be taken in its strict sense ; for, as before observed ¶, a warlike employment was totally inconsistent with the first principles of the

* “ Calangauar cain gyvrin,
 Cyvred awel a drychin ;
 Gwaith celwydd yw celu rhin.”
 TRIBANAU.

† “ Da i ddiriad ni ater,
 Namyn tristyd a phryder ;
 Ni adwna Duw ar à wnel.”
 I'R GOG YN ABER CWAWG.

‡ “ Y ddeilen à drevyd gwynt,
 Gwae hi a'i thynged !
 Hên hi,—eleni y ganed.”
 TRIBANAU.

§ Consult the six triplets beginning
 “ Vy mhedwar priv-gás erymoed,
 and terminating with
 Hir gnif heb esgor lludded.”

There is a remarkable affinity between this affecting complaint and many passages in the Book of Job. Indeed the circumstances, under which the two lamentations were made, are not very dissimilar. The loss of dominion, fortune, and children is common to both.

|| Pan aned Geraint oedd agored pyrth nev,
 Rhoddai Grist à arched,
 Pryd mirain Prydain ogoned.

MARWNAD GERAINT AB ERBIN.

¶ No. 6, p. 216, in the note.

Bardic Institution, founded, as it was, in universal peace and good will. And that the life of this venerable chieftain was devoted to martial pursuits is evident from most of his poems: and on two occasions he laments the infirmity of his latter years, which prevented him from participating in the battles of his country. If, however, Llywarch was not a legitimate bard, he was undeniably a poet, and, whether as a poet or a warrior, one of the most remarkable characters of a remarkable age.

* *

WELSH PROVERBS *.

Plant gwirionedd yw hen diarebion.—DIAREB.

—000—

HE, that hath found the handle, hath found also the blade.

Every nurse † is merry.

He, that is intent upon going, will do no good before he departs.

The young will laugh at the mischances of the old.

An angel on the road and a devil by his fire-side ‡.

Set on thy dog, but do not accompany him.

He, that has patience, will conquer §.

He mows the meadow with shears.

Who will not endure a servant must be his own slave ||.

The sorrow, that continues, becomes itself a calamity.

The fence of a bad farmer is full of gaps.

He, that ascends slowly, will descend quickly.

Every one has his neighbour for a mirror ¶.

* It ought to have been mentioned in the introductory account of the Welsh Proverbs in the 4th Number, that the collection, now extant, and published in the *Archæology*, was originally formed by old Cyris o Iâl about the beginning of the twelfth century, and afterwards copied successively by Gruffydd Hiraethog, the poet, about the year 1500, by the Rev. Dr. J. Davies, in 1580, by Mr W. Maurice, of Llansilin, in 1675, and ultimately in 1775, by the Rev. Evan Evans. See *Arch. of Wales*, vol. iii. in the Preface.

† The original word is *mammaeth*, which means properly a foster-mother, or, what the English call wet-nurse.

‡ For a similar sentiment, see *Ecclus. ch. vi. v. 4. 30.*

§ So the Arabic Proverb:—"I promise you victory after patience."

|| So in Arabic:—"He is a slave, who has no slave."

¶ Similar to this are the following Latin maxims:—

"Ex vitio alterius sæpius emendat suum."

Mimus Publanius.

"Optimum est alienâ frui insanîâ."

Plinius.